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## A&M parents reflect on a year in the spotlight

By Kim McGuire  
The Battalion

During last year's University Awards Ceremony, Rodney and Sue Hill thought they were going to see their daughter, Brooke, accept the Buck Weirus Spirit Award.

But it wouldn't be Brooke who walked away with an award, it was Rodney and Sue, who were named the 1993-1994 Parents of the Year.

The Hills had been duped. It was all an elaborate scheme just to get the unsuspecting couple to the ceremony.

**They carved the six wooden panels on display in the Memorial Student Center that commemorate 100 years of history at A&M.**

"My jaw just dropped," Sue said. "We were listening to the Iseharts (the past parents of the year) making their speech and the next thing I know we were on stage."

Part of the surprise, the Hills said, was because they thought they didn't fit the typical mold of past Parents of the Year.

They hadn't contributed a large amount of money to the University and Rodney, associate dean of student services for the College of Architecture, was a faculty member.

However, Jennifer Jeffries, Parents' Weekend Committee chairwoman, said the Hill's contributions are endless and the choice was obvious.

"The Hills are wonderful," Jeffries said. "They are very commit-

ted to A&M. They are truly deserving Parents of the Year."

Beth Schreiber, Parents of the Year subcommittee chairwoman, said the Hills were picked because of their contributions to A&M, their family and the community.

Some of the contributions the Hills have made are obvious, Schreiber said.

They carved the six wooden panels on display in the Memorial Student Center that commemorate 100 years of history at A&M.

The Hills said it took two years to complete the panel including countless hours of research spent in order to truly capture the spirit of A&M.

Rodney said he spent hours in the archives, interviewed several professors emeritus and went through old shoeboxes of memorabilia that he had gotten from spouses of deceased former students.

"At one time I felt like I knew more about A&M than any living person," Rodney said. "I felt like they should give us an honorary degree."

In addition to the panels, the Hills have carved a walnut ceremonial table commemorating Muster that is on display in the Clayton Williams Jr. Alumni Center, along with a bronze memorial to Silver Taps.

Schreiber said the Hills have also been involved at A&M through teaching.

Rodney is in charge of the student exchange program with the Universidad Francisco Marroquin in Guatemala, and during the summer of 1988, he taught in the Italian Study Abroad Program.

He has also been awarded the Ed Guthrie Advisor Award, Teacher Achievement Award from the Association of Former Stu-



Blake Griggs/The Battalion

1993-1994 Parents of the Year Rodney and Sue Hill

dents and Student Senate, and has had a Fish Camp and T-Camp named after him.

Sue was supervisor of the Physical Therapy Department at the A.P. Beutel Health Center from 1980-88 and developed volunteer programs for pre-PT majors.

However, it is clear after talking to the Hills, they feel their biggest accomplishments are daughter Brooke, Class of '93 and son Bunker, Class of '91.

The Hills said some of the highlights of being Parents of the Year have been being introduced before the LSU football game and Midnight Yell practice and working with the Parents' Weekend Committee.

Schreiber said her committee has eaten dinner with the Hills several times this past year.

"Rodney is very well-educated and creative and is known for his crazy ties, and Sue is very caring and loves to talk to people,"

Schreiber said.

Sue said the committee helped ease her "empty nest syndrome" that occurred when Brooke graduated.

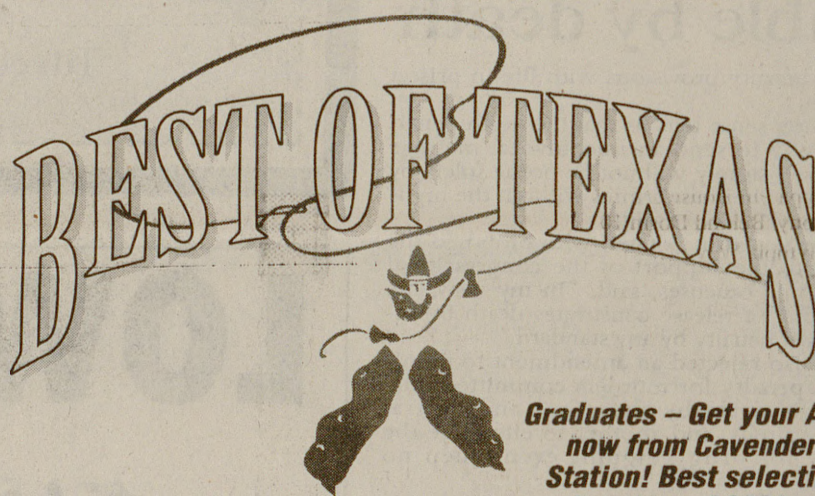
"I really feel like they've extended family, our sons and daughters," Sue said. "We've been their surrogate parents."

Rodney agreed. "They've been completely territorial," Rodney said. "We've been their surrogate parents."

They both said they would like to serve as Parents of the Year for another term. Nonetheless, the new Parents of the Year will be named Sunday 9 a.m. at the All-University Awards ceremony.

Rodney advised the future Parents of the Year to become immersed in the activities.

Sue offered the following advice: "They should relax and enjoy it. This is going to be the most wonderful trip of their life."



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